

Silhouette

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Ambridge Area High School

February 1997

AP Calculus to be added to curriculum

by Doug Costa

For the past fourteen years Ambridge has offered an advancement placement course, AP Biology. This is more than some schools offer, less than others. However, next year will mark the first step towards expanding the program; an AP Calculus will be offered. This decision was made by Dr. Parry, Mr. Persi and Mr. Sovich because all three feel that the addition of more AP classes will only serve to benefit their students.

Naming a class AP involves entering into a program which culminates in May with a test which, after successful completion, entitles the student to college credits at the school of their choice. The AP catalog offers twenty courses, such as various foreign languages, English and several other science courses.

Because AP is a double



Pictured (L to R) AP Class Teachers and Principal, Mr. Persi, Dr. Parry and Mr. Sovich.

period, as always this year's course consists of 10 class periods per week. Next year, however, that will be reduced to 18, with the remaining two going towards the new AP Calculus. Nevertheless, Mr. Sovich said that he supported the decision, saying, "This opens it up to the kids that they can take both or either. It makes a flexible schedule between the two" because both teachers can agree that certain lessons would be more conducive to spending more

than the allocated time in either class, allowing for especially important sections to still receive thorough treatment. Mr. Sovich added, "If this were just for regular calculus, no, I wouldn't like it, because of the time. But because of the way the AP is set up, we can work together, actually."

Mr. Persi, calculus teacher, is eager for the new program to take effect. "Since we have an AP Biology class, I think having other

AP courses is going to benefit our school district because many school districts offer AP classes in a multitude of subjects." Mr. Persi also feels that the extra time allotted because of the AP class will allow him to better cover the material, eliminating the rush through the course that has been present in years past. Mr. Persi added that a regular paced calculus course will be offered because he feels the AP class will be "faster paced," allowing him to cover additional material because, in the past, "It's often that I never can get it [additional material] covered [in the allotted time]."

Dr. Parry summed up the situation by saying, "The fact that we went to AP courses is really reflective of the fact that we think. That's a way to increase the skill level of our kids and to positively affect them for college admission."

Ambridge plays the name game

by Carole Bunting

For nearly 100 years, the Ambridge Area School District has been named after Ambridge. The School Board is now "exploring the possibility of a new name for the district." If the board decides to choose a new name, the new name will probably take affect in the year 2000.

The School Board decided to make a commitment to explore this possibility by researching the process of how to change a school's name and gathering the input of the community. If the name is changed, the Bridgers' nickname and the colors garnet and grey will remain. The new name will not reflect any

one of the five municipalities (Ambridge, Baden, Economy, Harmony Township and South Heights) that make up the Ambridge Area School District.

Dr. David Parry, principal of Ambridge Area High School, said, "I have mixed emotions on it [the possibility of the name change]. There are pluses and minuses to it."

Mr. William Pangas, a School Board member who is "very much against it," commented, "I think the point of the name change is that people want to give the district an upgraded image." Mr. Pangas concluded with the statement, "Something is what it is regardless of what it is called."

When asked what he thought

of the possibility of the school district's name changing and why, Mr. John Salopek, president of the School Board, replied, "I am 100 percent for it....in my mind it will better foster unity in the entire school district."

Some people have raised the question, "Why change the name of the school district?" Others have wondered, "What good will changing the school district's name bring?", or "If the name changes, will it just be a big waste of time and money?" People are encouraged to think about the issue and look for a time and place where they can voice their opinions.

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*** Find out all the information about President Clinton's inauguration.**

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Point/Counterpoint View at your own risk

by Emily DelGreco

In 1993, television began a new season with the usual fifth-grade provisions: "Home Improvement," "Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman" and "Roseanne." And while they proved to be dryly funny and heart-warming, Tim "the Toolman" Taylor wasn't the most popular of premieres this September. In fact, family fare like the above seemed to be lost in the shadows of a more ominous and potentially dangerous medium: that of R-rated prime-time television as created by Steven Bochco.

In my estimation the press drawn by Bochco's "NYPD Blue" in its first month of syndication probably outweighed that of "Home Improvement" for its entire season. Yet it was precisely the force working against "NYPD" (groups like The American Family Association of Tupelo, Miss.) that made it a hit in that first couple of weeks. Bochco created what was to become probably the greatest debate over the "limits" of network television of its time. Numerous ABC affiliates chose to censor the pilot and many more refused to air it. Even the show's advertisers became leery after right-wing spokesperson Rev. Donald Wildmon ran an ad in USA Today calling for petitions against the show.

Talk shows debated it, radio programs discussed it and newspapers wrote about it, but "NYPD Blue" wouldn't have been anymore than a failed controversy if it were not for that very first episode. Complete with barrier-breaking nudity, crotch grabbing and tasteless profanity, the show became and continues to be a success in the most complete sense of the word.

Nowadays it is easy to find an episode of "Charlie's Angels" or

"Three's Company" on at any time of day. Many would consider these to be conservative shows, and yet, in their infancy, shows like these created controversy not unlike that of "NYPD Blue." While many would argue that the two situations are unable to be compared, the general idea proves to be the same: 'Should television producers be able to push the limits of good taste?' But the better question is 'What exactly is good taste, and who determines it?' If it were not for producers unsatisfied with the status quo, America could still be watching "The Walton's" on Saturday nights. The point of mentioning these shows is very clear: They serve to prove that 'good taste,' like wine and milk, change with time, whether good or bad. If producers had given up in the face of controversy, America would never have had "Hill Street Blues," "St. Elsewhere" and even "All in the Family," hailed as a classic by many. In the words of "NYPD" co-executive producer David Milch, "[Television] is a medium that [makes] progress kicking and screaming."

Many would contend that "NYPD" is another Hollywood plot to deteriorate the moral code of America and while I'm not trying to deny that, let's remember that Hollywood isn't acting alone. I can't think of any producer that would purposely invest in a show in the hopes that it would fail. Let's face it, Hollywood, and, in essence, television, give us what we want. And if the flavor of the month happens to be tasteless sex and violence, you can be assured that it will always appear in excess. In truth, the real issue is not Hollywood, but rather America.

Television shows that last aren't living on the shock value of

nudity and profanity. "NYPD" is still around because it is, in the words of Time's Richard Zoglin, "a crackling good TV show." The realism takes hold of the viewer and while much of the audience has no notion of the life of an NYC detective, you can't help but feel that you're getting a pretty good idea. The characters are never perfect, but never criminally rotten either; kind of like real life. The jokes, subtle but funny, are worth watching for and the plot is never dull. The storyline manages to explore facets of our society (rape, harassment, race) in a believable fashion while quietly leaving the final decision up to the viewer.

A majority of "NYPD's" audience really consists of middle-aged conservatives who feel the occasional sex and profanity isn't necessary in the least, but who will not sacrifice one genuinely good TV show for material that is really no worse than what the box office is offering at the time. Contrary to what has become popular belief, "NYPD" and "Millennium" viewers are not gutter-mouthed sex fiends with a taste for the unusual. In fact,

they are not unlike everyone else in that they are simply in search of a TV show with plot lines a little more sophisticated than "The Jeff Foxworthy Show."

Bochco's original idea of R-rated TV was created with the same basic premise of R-rated films, yet on a much tamer basis. "NYPD" was produced for adults, as were many of the other emerging television controversies like "Millennium" and "The X-Files." Contention has made parents aware of this fact and it is their responsibility, not network television's, to decide what it is their child watches. For a parent, and only a parent, can decide what constitutes good taste for their children.

In order for good taste to remain a relative issue, the content of television, as with other media, should be determined by the individual and not by special interests groups. For who better to decide what you watch on Tuesday nights than yourself?

Silhouette

Ambridge Area High School

909 Duss Avenue

Ambridge, PA 15003

Doug Costa
Editor-in-Chief

Mike Cody
Assistant Editor

Katie Madonna
Opinion Editor

Erin McBroom/Bonnie Marr
News Editors

Emily DelGreco
Feature Editor

Bryan Hooks
Sports Editor

Peggy Madonna
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Mike Dwyer
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Joe Kulik
Graphics/Cartoonist

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Carole Bunting Rich Dugan Sarah Clark Kristie Miller Jennifer Richards

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Photography
Joe Kulik/Rich Kuzma/Missy Smoley

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The SILHOUETTE will be a public forum for the exchange of comment and criticism, open to students, faculty, administration, parents, and others in the school community. The SILHOUETTE is the official school newspaper published once a month at the cost of 25 cents per issue. It is printed by the Record Printing Company of Ambridge.

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Point/Counterpoint

Controversy doesn't mean quality

by Mike Cody

Everyone is familiar with the old saying, "It's eleven o'clock. Do you know where your children are?" However, in recent times, "Do you know what your children are watching?" has become just as pressing an issue. As far as network sensitivity to violence, profanity and nudity goes, television is just not what it used to be. Children turning on the television late at night almost assuredly find examples of dark violence and vulgarity masked as quality viewing. The new television rating system is a step in the right direction. Now parents have perhaps a greater understanding of what each show that their children watch contains. But shouldn't networks share in the responsibility for ensuring that the programs they air are suitable for all or most viewers?

Certain television shows like *NYPD Blue* have paved the way for greater tolerance of profanity and nudity on major networks. Several recent programs have taken advantage of the newly stretched boundaries of censorship. But in most cases, it seems like the additional profanity, violence and sex is only geared to increase

ratings, not improve the overall quality of the show.

Steven Bochco's dismal CBS sitcom *Public Morals* was one recent example. The program was roundly dismissed by both critics and the viewing public, but garnered national attention for using some of the most needlessly foul language ever heard on television during the original pilot. CBS and Bochco tried to defend the use of profanity, pointing out that the program aired (supposedly) too late for children to watch. Still, the program's poor overall quality led to *Public Morals* being canceled after only one episode.

On the other hand, the Fox drama series *Millennium* has been a ratings success since its premiere. Critics hailed the show but warned that it was perhaps the darkest and most gruesomely violent network program ever. For example, during one segment, a man whose eyes and mouth were sewn closed was buried alive. *Millennium* premiered at nine o'clock, a time when many children were probably still watching.

To further explore the desensitization of America to violence, one only has to note the success of such "reality-based" shows as *Animals Attack*. The program, a

consistent ratings winner for the Fox network, blatantly exploits real violence in order to gain ratings. It seems improbably that Fox or any other network can justify a program consisting only of people being mauled by animals as family-suitable entertainment.

It has been said that once a mind has been introduced to a new idea, it can never again return to its original state. The same could be said for the boundaries of acceptance on network television. Although the series *NYPD Blue* will probably be remembered as one of television's finest dramas, the controversy resulting from the series' raw language and unnecessary nudity will always have lasting repercussions. Three years after its inception, the program still has its loyal fans, but ratings have decreased. It could be assumed that for every viewer who enjoys the program for the intense drama it is, there are other viewers who only watch *NYPD Blue* hoping for shock. Once those shocks went away, the viewers either turned elsewhere or lost interest.

One controversy after another, week after week, is no way for a television show to be produced. Successful ratings garnered from profanity or nudity are no substitute

for a poor level of overall quality. Perhaps the American people are tired of the low-level offerings that pervade their televisions, explaining the surprising recent success of "heartfelt" programs.

Networks should begin policing themselves to ensure that controversy is not viewed as quality. The viewing public has a right to be treated justly by the networks they support and not force-fed mindless drivel such as *Public Morals*, a show which may only be remembered for being the first network program to use a crude nickname for female genitalia. Television networks have a great responsibility to the American people. They must certainly inform and entertain, but also they must make sure that their entertainment does not vault over the boundaries of good taste simply to make an easy profit.

Since its inception, television has been an educational tool, a source of entertainment and even a brief escape from the world. But when television depicts ugliness greater than that in the world the viewer is escaping from, something is definitely wrong.

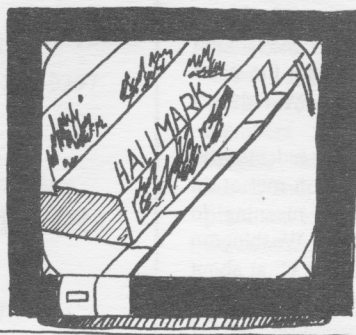
What's love got to do with it?

by Peggy Madonna

Do you know that the day with the highest suicide rate is Valentine's Day? This may sound surprising because, well, it isn't actually true. Okay, I made it up, but it would've made a really good point.

The whole day exists so that mushy, lovey-dovey couples can display their adoration for one another in public. It has always been my opinion that this is completely uncalled for. No one wants to see that - any day, much less February 14. What are you trying to prove?

Supposedly, Valentine's Day is for lovers. Isn't everyday for



...and Valentine's Day was ruined when Peggy Madonna Hallmark stores nation wide.

lovers? Everybody is in love or searching for it. Too bad Valentine's Day is just a marketing scam like Grandmother's Day and

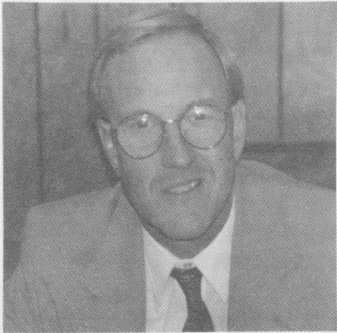
Secretary Appreciation Day. What's next, "Give Your Bus Driver a Hug Day"? This is just how Hallmark stays in business. I'm about to make

up a holiday and try to market stupid, expensive merchandise for it myself.

I don't dislike Valentine's Day. As a matter-of-fact, I think it is a really nice idea. I guess I just hate seeing someone get depressed by the entire month of February. If you're racing the clock to find someone to get you stuff - that's a sad, terrible thing to do and if you are, you're a terrible person deserving of death - just kidding.

Do not let this day affect your self-esteem. I'll get you chalky, little candy hearts that say "Be mine" and "I love you" if that will make you happy. You know what - I'll even pretend to mean it.

Dr. Parry moves up the ranks



by Bonnie Marr

After 42 years in education, 34 years of which were here at Ambridge Area School District, Dr. Stanley Duplaga is retiring as

assistant superintendent. Replacing Dr. Duplaga will be Dr. David Parry, Ambridge Area High School's principal.

When Dr. Parry was hired here seven years ago, he let it be known that he had an interest in the Assistant Superintendent position. Assistant Superintendent has been one of his personal goals to become involved in central education. Since the school board was well aware of this, no formal interviews were needed. The school board knew Dr. Parry was the man for the job. He was offered this position based on his seven year record at Ambridge.

Recently Dr. Parry has

received his doctorate. Since the doctorate is in administration he states, "hopefully it will be useful." So there is a relationship there to become a better educator.

An official notice at the December board meeting that the assistant superintendent position was vacated finally fulfilled Dr. Parry's goal. Within a couple of days a contract was drawn up and Dr. Parry signed it. Assistant Superintendent is a commission position. This means Dr. Parry signed a personal contract and is directly responsible to the school board.

Dr. Parry's contract is for five years, the longest term this type of contract can go for. The contract starts July 1, this will give Dr. Parry a chance to start under Dr. Duplaga's instruction.

When asked if he hopes to become Superintendent, Dr. Parry replies, "I am not sure. I have to know if I am right for this position [Assistant Superintendent] first."

Dr. Parry's position as principal was announced at January's board meeting. Applications will be reviewed throughout the spring. Dr.

Parry hopes to be on the interview committee, which consists usually of: teachers, administrators and sometimes parents, to part of the decision making process.

As Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Parry "looks forward to working with all the students in the Ambridge Districts K-12." He has really enjoyed his time here at Ambridge Area High School, but still looks forward to working in the building [Ambridge].

From principal to Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Parry will continue to be a positive influence. Farewell Dr. Parry!

History students attend inauguration

by Erin McBroom

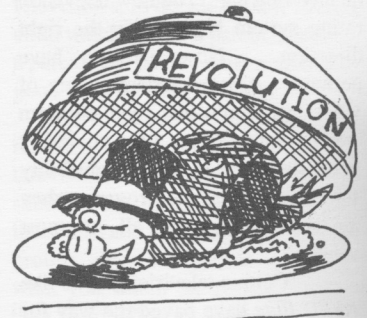
About a quarter of a million people converged on Washington D.C., January 20, 1997, to witness the swearing in of the President of the United States William Jefferson Clinton and Vice-president Albert Gore, Jr. Among the multitudes of people were 27 Ambridge students and their chaperons.

In the beginning of the ceremony the Rev. Billy Graham gave the invocation to the thousands of waiting people, who afterward joined in the Pledge of Allegiance. Vice-president Gore was the first to be sworn in. His oath was given by Associate Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Preceded by loud cheers from the crowd, President Clinton was given his oath of office by Chief Justice William Rehnquist. Clinton's left hand lay on his own family Bible, held by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton while he took his oath.

Clinton's inaugural address lasted only about 20 minutes, but he set forth many ideals by which he intends to govern in his next four years as President of the United States of America. "Once again we are building stronger families, thriving communities, better educational opportunities, a cleaner environment," said Clinton in his

speech. He stressed the need for the American people to be the solution, and the government should be "humble enough not to try to solve all our problems for us..." In his speech Clinton voiced his hope that, with the coming of the turn of the century, this country would become one to eliminate the radical prejudice that exists in the U.S. today. He believes that we cannot succeed as a country without eliminating the hate. The inauguration, this year, coincided with the celebration of Martin Luther King Day. Clinton believes that King's dream, that America would "treat all its citizens as equals" is the American dream. Clinton ended his inaugural address with these words, "May God strengthen our hands for the good work ahead, and always, always bless our America."

The Ambridge students who went to the inauguration met at an early 2 a.m. Sunday morning to begin the long drive to Washington D.C. They arrived in D.C. at about 7:30 in the morning. Before witnessing the inauguration the students toured some of the monuments. After the inauguration, they had the opportunity to see some of the Smithsonian Museums. Students arrived back in Ambridge early Tuesday morning.



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There's always room for Jell-O...wrestling

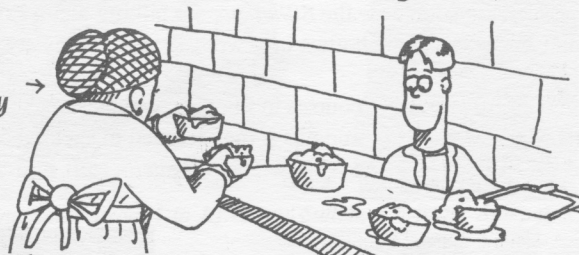
by Mike Cody

What makes an athlete determined to excel? Is it the feeling of adrenaline rushing through his body? Is it the indescribable sensation found in every win? Is it the rhythmic slap of cold Jell-O against warm flesh? Is it...God, this is ridiculous. This is an article about Jell-O wrestling, not a Heisman trophy winner.

On February 14, Valentine's Day, Ambridge High's fieldhouse will be transformed into a mecca of Jell-O related excitement. No word yet on whether Bill Cosby will be in attendance.

The idea has met with success at other area schools, which of course, begs the question: Is there room for Jell-O at Ambridge High? Senior Class sponsor Mrs. Hapich certainly seems to think so. She first came across the offbeat idea when she found a letter from a company called Novelty Wrestling, Inc. stuck in her mailbox. Novelty Wrestling, Inc. has the dubious reputation for providing the best Jell-O and pudding wrestling in Pennsylvania. The company, based in Catawissa, PA, has been covered by national publications such as Newsweek and

Take more Jell-O, we have plenty of it.



The Monday following Jell-O wrestling.

USA Today and featured on ESPN2 and the USA Network. Although reaction among Senior Class officers was somewhat mixed, the club decided to pay the company \$1200 to bring its unique brand of fun to Ambridge.

Some people have questioned why the fundraiser is being held on Valentine's Day. Unfortunately, that was the only day Novelty Wrestling, Inc. was available to provide the equipment. When asked if she was worried about Valentines' Day taking away some of the potential profit from the fundraiser, Mrs. Hapich said that she hoped students would begin their evening with the Jell-O wrestling event before dinner or any other plans. Don't worry, in keeping with the Valentine's Day spirit, the wrestlers will be in red Jell-O. How

romantic.

Keeping with this reporter's tradition of asking the tough questions, I begged the question of why the wrestling was going to be in Jell-O and not pudding. Mrs. Hapich responded by saying that many people were unwilling to wrestle in pudding for the fundraiser.

So just who will be wrestling on Valentine's Day? A rather motley crew of faculty members, including Mr. Mullen, Mr. Marvin, Ms. Modany, Mr. Eagle, and even Mrs. Hapich will be among those entering the ring. Strangely enough, this won't be Mr. Mullen's first time competing in the Jell-O soaked brawl. The assistant-principal took part in another Jell-O wrestling fundraiser at another school. Interested students may have to

compete in the ring on a first-come, first-serve basis.

How does administration feel about the unique fundraiser? Dr. Parry seemed rather jittery when questioned about the whole idea. "All I know is that Mr. Mullen convinced me that it's a good thing," he said.

Mrs. Hapich seemed optimistic when asked about the fundraiser's chances for success. "We are going to definitely at least break even," she said with a smile.

The fundraiser, perhaps Ambridge's finest cultural event of the year, takes place in the fieldhouse on February 14, from 7:30 to around 9:30 in the evening. Advance student tickets are \$3, and tickets at the door for students and adults are \$5. The senior class wants to especially encourage attendance, since it will take a minimum of 400 people in attendance to break even. So tell your friends, tell your grandparents, tell the old lady down the street who has all those cats. After all, the opportunity to see Mrs. Hapich wrestle in Jell-O doesn't come along too often.

This Month in *Silhouette* History.....

In February of 1983 the *Silhouette* held a M*A*S*H trivia contest, with a grand prize of a ten-dollar gift certificate to National Record Mart

Language clubs hit the slopes

by Mike Dwyer

On Thursday, January 23, Ambridge's language clubs embarked on their annual ski trip. Skiers, snowboarders and "tubers" alike made up the more than 250 members in attendance. After school, the clubs boarded coach buses, and, following the traditional pizza and ice-tea dinner, they started the two hour drive to Seven Springs.

Around 5:30, the buses arrived at Seven Springs, and within the hour the slopes were littered with Ambridge students. The snow was icy and hard. Not ideal conditions for skiing, but most students enjoyed themselves. Chris Illerman, junior, had this to say, "The conditions were poor, but the atmosphere was

grand. The pizza was good, too."

Of course, not everyone had a good time. The usual assortment of bumps and bruises were compiled over the evening. Miss Ritchey, German Club Sponsor, says, "The Ski Patrol was very professional and helpful." Fortunately, none of the injuries were too serious.

One new aspect of the trip was "tubing", which came with mixed reviews. Junior Ahmad Douglas said, "Tubing really doesn't hold your interest for too long," since their were only two slopes to use.

At 10:30, the buses left and returned to Ambridge around midnight. The trip was summed up by French Club Sponsor Mrs. Douglas, who said "We had some problems, but we had a good time."



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Ebonics hits the streets

by Katie Madonna

Time magazine, national broadcasts, and now the *Silhouette* are talking about Ebonics.

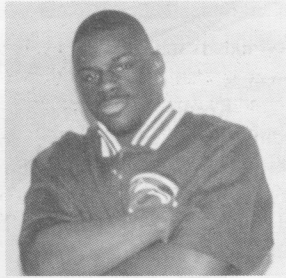
In the past months, Ebonics has become the hottest buzzword in today's society, yet many are still ignorant to exactly what it is all about.

In Oakland, California, schools are proposing courses in Ebonics, which is essentially the study of African-American "street-talk." The teachers feel they could better understand their students if they learned to speak their "language." This idea has caused controversy on the sides of both teachers and students, blacks and whites. The *Silhouette* staff decided to take a poll to see what Ambridge students thought (and get out of class).



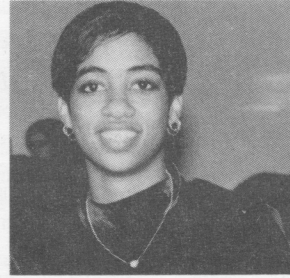
"It can not be considered a language. It is a dialect. I consider it a dialect for the lazy. I don't think it should be encouraged in any institution."

Jaclyn Kurash
Senior



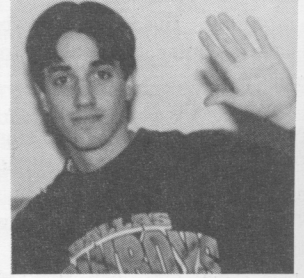
"I'm down with it."

Cliff Davis
Senior



"I don't think it should be taught. Plain and simple."

Kenisha Carlisle
Senior



"It's an excuse for ignorance."

Mike Glumac
Senior

ADAPT invited to mocktail party

by Carole Bunting

ADAPT was the host of a mocktail party, which was held during a lock-in at the Sewickley YMCA on February 22. TLC (Teen Leadership Corps) hosted the lock-in. They invited 180 students from various schools throughout the county on a first-come-first-serve basis. The students were asked to pay \$10 each.

Members of ADAPT served mixed drinks at their mocktail party for the students at the lock-in. The drinks were similar to cocktails but without the alcohol. ADAPT's mocktail party was only one feature of the lock-in, which was similar to the Bridger Blizzard and had many activities including sports, games and movies.

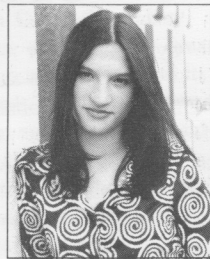
Emily DelGreco, a junior and president of ADAPT, said, "The mocktail party provided me with an excellent opportunity to wear my mocktail dress in an alcohol-free

environment full of fun, excitement and non-alcoholic beverages."

CLIFF ROEHN PHOTOGRAPHY

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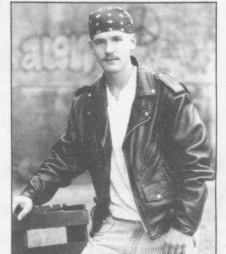
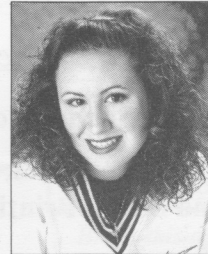
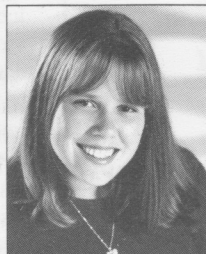
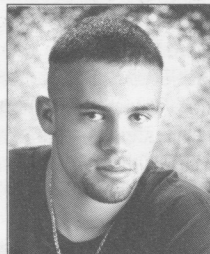
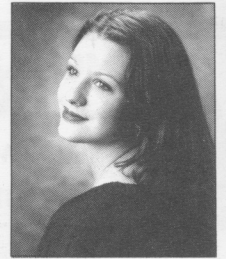


SENIORS '97 By T.R. McCLELLAN PHOTOGRAPHY

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Three students compete for junior miss

by Jaime Cole

Once again Ambridge Area High School will be well represented in Beaver County's Junior Miss program. Three junior girls, Patty Sutton, Christina Aloe and Megan Chalupiak, have been selected among many candidates as finalists in this year's program.

The Junior Miss program is a nationwide scholarship that is conducted at county, state and national levels. The national competition is always held in Mobile, Alabama, where the program originated in 1958.

The main focus of the program is to recognize and promote excellence among young women by rewarding their personal and scholastic excellence with



Junior Miss Contestants (from l to R): Patty Sutton, Christine Aloe, and Megan Chalupiak

scholarship money to be used to further their education. Each year over \$6 million is granted to the contestants through scholarships and other awards. More than 200 colleges and universities offer scholarships, and each state winner is given a complete four-year scholarship.

The girls are judged with the same standards at each level: county,

state and national. The evaluation format is also constant: 20 percent for scholastic achievement, 25 percent for creative and performing arts, 15 percent for fitness, 15 percent for presence and composure and 25 percent for a final panel interview.

Much hard work and preparation is required before the 20 young women appear on stage for

the actual program. There are countless hours of interviewing and fitness practice, many fundraisers and events held and an endless amount of forms to be filled. That is not including the outside practice for the individual talent portion, the many, many stores searched through for a suit and the late nights trying to stay awake long enough to watch *Dateline*.

In the program Christina and Patty are planning to sing for the talent portion and Megan will dance. These three girls are to be commended. They have busy schedules to keep for the next few months. The *Silhouette* staff wishes them the best of luck.

Big Brothers/Big Sisters help kids grow up

by Nicole Webb

Almost every day, articles in newspapers and magazines portray teenagers as being self-centered, irresponsible and untrustworthy. That generalization may hold true for some teenagers but not for all. The Ambridge High School students who serve as mentors at Anthony Wayne Elementary School are an example of teenagers who do not fit the mold of the so-called "typical trouble-makin' teen."

The mentoring program was started in conjunction with Anthony Wayne Elementary School and the Interact club. Big Brothers/Big Sisters (BB/BS) is a national organization that matches children from single parent families, "littles," with adult volunteers, "bigs." The



Louis and his big brother, Ryan Benedict, playing cards "littles" in the mentoring program do not have to be from single parent families. They are children who might need help in school or who just need a positive role model.

Mrs. Michelle Micija is the BB/BS caseworker in charge of the mentoring program. She makes the matches and oversees all the activities. A month after they are matched, Mrs. Micija interviews the

"littles." She has found that the "littles" in the program have a more positive attitude and some are doing better in school. Mrs. Micija has also noticed how attached the children become to their "bigs." Some "littles" become visibly upset if their "bigs" do not come to mentoring.

The success of the program is not easy to measure. However, Mrs. Micija is excited about the number of mentors willing to volunteer their time to help the children. "As far as big kids involved and enthusiasm, if I could judge with that I would say that it [mentoring program] is [successful]."

The mentoring program meets at 2:10 every Tuesday and Thursday. High school mentors get out of ninth period 15 minutes early on those days. Surprisingly, Mrs. Micija said that the high school teachers are very supportive of the program.

There are many reasons for getting involved in the program.

Sophomore Michael Hoover became a Big Brother because he enjoys working with little kids. Mike's Little, Sean, is in sixth grade. During mentoring, they play games and do homework but their favorite activity is playing basketball together.

Mike and Sean have only been matched for two months and yet they are already good friends. When asked what he thought of the program, Sean said, "It's cool!"

Mike really likes being a Big Brother. "I think the program is good," he said. "I think it's good for the kids and high school students." On the down side, he said there is a need for more male mentors.

Being a Big Sister has always been a dream for Senior Cheryl Andoga. Cheryl, who has been involved in the program for three years, said, "I always thought it would be nice to have someone little looking up to me." Cheryl's Little, Jessica, is in fourth grade. Their favorite thing to do together is play with play dough.

Cheryl admits that at first it was difficult to get Jessica to open up. Over a period of time, they have learned more about each other and they now get along well. Jessica looks up to Cheryl and said she's very nice. She also said she hopes to be nice like her Big.

continued on page 11

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Pink pants and a whole league more

by Jaime Cole

Mr. Persi, calculus, pre-calculus and geometry teacher and PA Math League Sponsor, is much more than meets the eye. Whether it is helping one of his many students after school, playing 18 holes with "mostly anyone that will" golf with him, or composing creative word problems, such as the volume of a smurf, to keep students interested, Mr. Persi is always busy.

He has been teaching for 31 years. Mr. Persi got his degree in math at Clarion before completing his education at Pitt with a masters in education. He first started teaching because he "needed a job like anyone else." When he was young there were only a few choices to make concerning the future, "go to the service, work at J and L or go to



Calculus/Math league students pose with teacher/sponsor, Mr. Persi

college. It took off from there." When asked if he was thinking of retiring, he responded with a smile, "I'm always thinking of retiring." Then he seriously stated that it will probably happen within the next four years.

There is always someone in one of his classes who will keep track of and write down the famous "Persi quotes." "Who do you think is the bugkiller in my house?...whether

it be a flea, an elephant, ...I'm the terminator." That is a fact partly because he is the only male in a house with five other women. "It's very exciting, never a dull moment." The Persi's have four daughters. The youngest is senior Marie Persi. This is Marie's third year of being in one of her father's classes. When asked how she felt about this, she said, "I'm kind of used to it. It just seems natural to have my dad as a teacher."

Just as some kids have aspirations of being a fireman or a professional football player, Mr. Persi always wanted to become a professional golfer. The only thing he wishes he had done differently in his life was to "do more with the golfing profession."

Regarding being at Ambridge, he wishes that they would just "let me teach", saying there are "always too many interruptions."

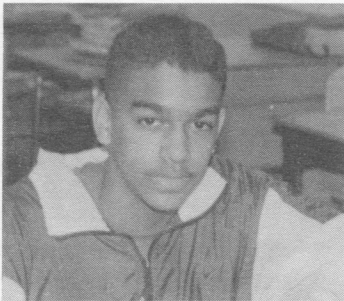
About education as a whole he states, "Everyone wants to come up with...better ways to teach. Everything goes in cycles."

Mr. Persi has been the sponsor of PA Math League for "at least 10 years." The league is composed of students from schools in every county in the state. Monthly tests are given, and students are awarded one point for each correct answer. The Ambridge branch of the league consists of 61 students. Six schools in Beaver County compete, and, as of January, Ambridge is in first place.

Mr. Persi feels that the main functions of the league are "competition and enjoyment, but most students are doing it for extra-credit. Currently he is the only teacher in the high school to give extra-credit for participation in the league.

Mr. Persi is well respected as a teacher and as a person. Many students who do well in college math courses owe much of their success to him. The interview would not be complete without asking if he had any comments concerning the infamous pink pants. His only response was, "They will come out in the spring."

Mike Rivera-the next generation



by Sarah Clark

In an age when crime is high and family values are low, a group of 14 year-olds has found its voice and wants to be heard. The class of 2000 has finally reached high school and is ready to take command.

On Thursday, January 23, CBS nationally broadcast a two-hour special simply titled "The Class of 2000." The program focused on the challenges faced by today's freshman such as grades, drugs, death and sex. In the middle of the program, each local CBS affiliate was allotted ten minutes to air interviews from students in its area. KDKA-TV chose Ambridge as one of its schools and Mike Rivera as the lucky freshman.

In his interview, Mike said he enjoyed going to a larger school like Ambridge because there is more competition and more incentive to do your best. As a player on

Ambridge's freshman basketball team, Mike certainly knows a thing or two about competition. However, he feels his greatest challenge is to graduate high school with a 4.0 and go to a good college. When asked if society was placing a lot of pressure on his graduating class, Mike replied, "Not really. I just think they try to do the best that we can because we are the people of tomorrow."

When it comes to preparing students for the future, Rivera feels that Ambridge is doing a good job. "They're [the teachers] preparing us pretty good. The classes are a lot harder to make us do the best we can for the future." If given the opportunity, the only thing Mike would change about the school would be "the way we look at our sports program." He feels that Ambridge is too often thought of as having losing teams and school spirit is entirely too low.

Society should expect to feel some major shockwaves when the class of 2000 hits the real world. Not only will the world have entered a new millennium, but a new generation will be running it with fresh ideas and high hopes. The freshman are enjoying knowing this, too. According to Mike, being in the class of 2000 "feels pretty good."



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Bridger Review



Movie Review

by Joe Kulik

"A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away. . . ." We all remember those familiar words, and now they are back on the big screen.

Star Wars, if you do not know, has been rereleased with new enhanced special effects, digital sound and previously cut scenes from the original. Seeing *Star Wars* in the theater was exciting enough, but the touched-up effects, such as in the death star battle, made it even better. I thought this was the most exciting movie experience and so did the enthusiastic crowd. Never before have I heard people clap and cheer during a movie. I totally agree with Senior Ben Lehman when he said "Yoi! That was a good movie!"

When Mike Glumac exclaimed "Spock rocks!" the only complaint I had is about when Greedo, the bounty hunter who confronts Han Solo about Jabba's money, fires a laser before Han kills him. Other than that scene everything was perfect, especially the computer generated Jabba the Hutt, and that is why I give this movie five stars.

If you still cannot get enough *Star Wars*, *The Empire Strikes Back* will be released February 21, and *Return of the Jedi* March 7 and the *Star Wars* prequels 1999. The force will be with us. . . always.



Music Review

by Kristie Miller

I am sure you have all heard the song "Flood", but are you familiar with the rest of the album? Jars of Clay is a Christian band who has recently become secularly popular. The top ten hit song "Flood" is sung by the group Jars of Clay. The band's unique sound is the reason for its sudden success.

The group's self-entitled album combines slow melodies with upbeat alternative rock. Each song is characterized by the use of various

instruments such as the violin, oboe, bass, cello, organ, piano and percussion instruments. All of the songs are about Jesus and his infinite love. They also describe how to cope and deal with today's problems.

One interesting aspect is that their name comes from scripture: 2 Corinthians 4:7 "But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us."

Given the unique alternative style, I would recommend Jars of Clay for someone who could appreciate the musical creativity and effort put into this album.



Restaurant Review

by Bryan Hooks

On a recent outing, my girlfriend and I dined at the Log Cabin Inn in Zelenople.

Considering that it was a Saturday night, we had to wait forty-five minutes to get a table. The waiting room was cold at first, but as more people congregated inside, it became quite toasty. Eventually we were seated at our table.

As we walked through the crowded restaurant, I began to notice my surroundings. There were many people standing, socializing around the bar, all seeming to be having a good time. The decor on the wall consisted of mounted animal heads and antique Indian relics. The atmosphere was very comfortable.

For dinner, we both ordered scrod cod and salad. The food was quickly prepared, and it was very good. We could not finish the meal, because the portions were quite large. From this, we concluded that desert could not be imagined.

Price is usually not a factor for me, but for those of you who are concerned, the costs were very reasonable.

Besides learning that the food was good, I also learned an important tip: Check to see if your napkin is paper before you put your gum into it.

I encourage everyone to try the Log Cabin Inn. It would be best to make a reservation if you do not want to wait.



Video Review

by Mike Dwyer

Mallrats the 1995 comedy release from MCA, is one of my favorite movies. The follow-up to the cult classic, *Clerks*, *Mallrats* doesn't have much in the way of a plot, but the dialogue is unparalleled in today's movies.

The storyline centers around Brady and T.S. played by Jeremy London and Jason Lee, two twenty something slackers who both lose their girlfriends on the same day. Brady is a comic book junkie who has problems communicating with his girlfriend Renee (Shannon Doherty). T.S. is slightly more level-headed and is distraught with his girlfriend Brandy played by Claire Forlani.

Brandy's father, in an attempt to break the couple up, puts Brandy on a game show taped at the local mall.

Helping Brady and T.S. sabotage the game show are Jay (Michael Rooker) and the aptly named Silent Bob, two holdovers from *Clerks*. Kevin Smith who played Silent Bob also wrote and directed.

Other characters pop into the story along the way and produce some memorable scenes. One such scene features Marvel Comics' Stan Lee offering Brady love advice.

The dialogue was what made the movie so spectacular. The subjects touched on and scattered vulgarity add a rich, familiar atmosphere. Everyone will be able to identify with at least one of the characters. This movie isn't for everyone, but it's good entertainment.



Book Review

by Erin McBroom

Everyone knew it would happen, a sequel to *Jurassic Park*. *The Lost World* is Michael Crichton's answer to the question:

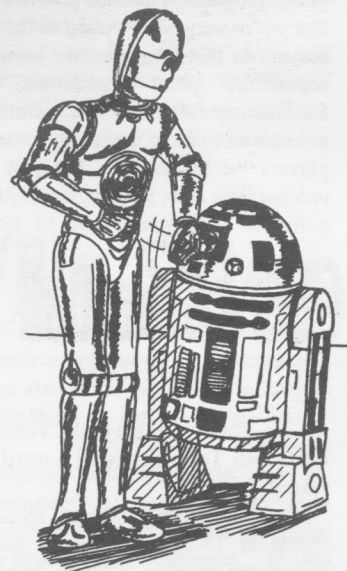
what really happened with the big *Jurassic Park* disaster?

Surprisingly the book has nothing to do with the original island in *Jurassic Park*. Crichton's attention to detail was amazing. He goes into great detail to explain some of the equipment used in this book. Crichton also puts two young children, as in *Jurassic Park*, to face the deadly dinosaurs.

This book is a definite must read. Crichton continues in his style of writing so you can't stop reading till the end. I highly recommend this book and hope you will read it before seeing the movie. But, for those of you who cringe when you see a book over one hundred pages, *The Lost World* will be made into a movie.

STAR RATING SYSTEM

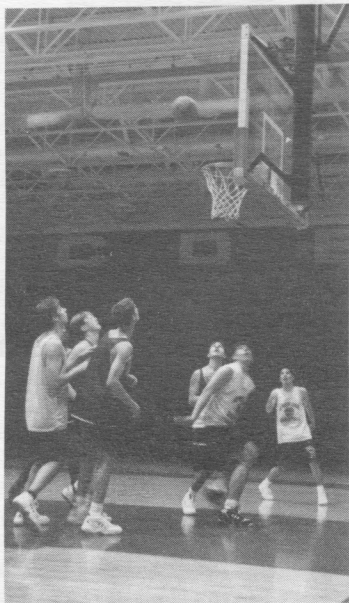
- ★★★★ Da Bomb
- ★★★ Better than a Mentos Commerical
- ★★ My Mom liked it
- ★ I'd rather do Calculus



YES, ARTOO, I KNOW THERE IS A TYPO IN THE STAR WARS REVIEW. YOU BETTER HOPE MASTER D. DOES NOT NOTICE, HE WILL DEACTIVATE US FOR SURE.

Joe's Kulik

Boys basketball has successful season despite losses



Pictured is the Ambridge Boys' Basketball team practicing.

by Emily DelGreco

"Well I don't necessarily think its an unsuccessful year. I think actually on the surface it looks unsuccessful, but underneath, the J.V. have been winning or very, very close to winning a lot of Quad A basketball games. . . . So, its just a young program. The main problem is that we're very, very young as far as players in the program: we have a sophomore point guard and a freshman point guard. It's almost unheard of to have that many young players on the court. It's just a process right now, the program is just going to take some time to turn

around." This was the response of Head Coach Jeff Meddock when asked about the 4-15 record of the high school basketball team.

The team will not be able to escape the "age factor" for at least another two years, since the returning members next year will be mostly sophomores and juniors. "We're probably [going to be] younger next year than we are this year, as far as experience. So we just have to work on playing a lot of basketball in the summertime, [the] same thing we did last summer. And I think, eventually, the program will turn around," said Meddock.

Excitement was high at the beginning of the season with the debut of the basketball schedule complete with a picture of the team dressed in military uniforms to complement the Bridger Brigade theme. Ironically, though, defense has proven to be their greatest weakness. "Our main problem this year has been [that] we are not playing good defense. Last year's squad played good defense, but wasn't that good offensively. This year, we're a better offensive team, as far as shooting the ball, but we're not playing good defense," acknowledged Meddock.

"Pretty much everybody," was the almost humorous reply of Coach Meddock when asked about the team's most difficult opponents. He then added that New Castle, North Allegheny and Butler provide for the most demanding games.

Team morale is intact, despite the trying games and low scores. Junior Varsity player Tony

Cameron offered some advice by saying, "Don't get discouraged. . . you're real young right now, just wait two years." And while game attendance isn't especially high, Ambridge basketball still manages to keep its loyal fans. "They were better last year," admitted devoted fan Nicole Kowalecki. "John [Wanchick] is a really good player." For no apparent reason, she ended by saying, "It's been real."

Meddock is proud of the team, win or lose. "Basically, the thing is that they represent the school district well and that's really the main key. . . . They've never embarrassed the school district, they've never been thrown out of a basketball game. They've never done anything other than come to the gym and work and never cause me personally or my staff a problem. That, to me is the key. They are very, very successful people because of that," he said.

Statistician Matt Gerega stated "most of the losing is due to inexperience." He sympathizes with the team because "they practice hard all week," and by the end of the week they "still are working hard, but just can't win." Gerega believes that the inexperience is natural considering "there were only three returning [varsity] players." However, he feels

that by "putting the team in more game situations" during practice, improvement is inevitable.

Sophomore point-guard Tim Kingas said, "We're not showing our best efforts right now, but I think that with a lot of hard work, we could be real good." He feels that the present coaching staff is "giving us [the team] their best effort." One of Kingas' own personal goals is to defeat New Castle, he said, "I hope we can do that."

The team has felt the continuous support of the parent group and booster club. "[They have] really gotten behind things such as the team room. They put \$3000 into the team facility," said Meddock. They were also responsible for the schedule posters and, according to Meddock, already have next year's poster theme picked. However, he wouldn't reveal it, saying "We'll leave that one for you to ponder."

As a final thought, Meddock quoted ex-Notre Dame Football Coach Lou Holtz by saying, "We're not where we're gonna be, we're not where we wanna be, and we're not where we used to be either."

Girls basketball season successful

by Bryan Hooks

The Ambridge Girls' Varsity Basketball Team is having a terrific season.

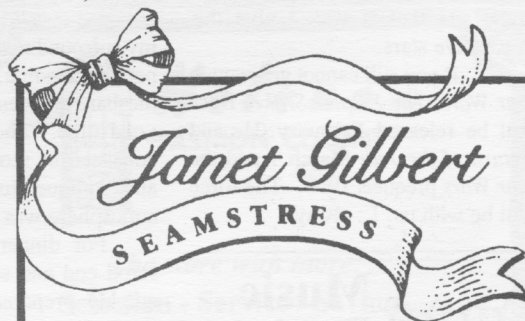
The team's current record stands at 13-5. They have four games yet to play. These games include Ellwood City, Blackhawk, New Brighton and Hopewell. If the girls' team beats Ellwood City and Hopewell, they will earn a spot in the playoffs.

Let us not forget that the team won the OLSH tournament in the beginning of the season. This

was the highlight, thus far, of Stephanie Szabo's senior year. When asked how this year compares to past years, Stephanie replied, "We're winning! In the last two years, we had only won four games."

When asked what she feels the team's future holds in years to come, freshman Erica Harsh replied, "We should do good, considering the talent coming up."

Good luck and congratulations to the girls' basketball team on an impressive season.



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Senior football players recognized at banquet

by Rich Dugan

The Ambridge Football Parents, Association held it's annual banquet on January 19 at Javy's Hall, honoring the Bridgers' past season.

Eli Holsinger won the AB Deep Award which is given to a senior that is both physically and mentally talented. The plaque, which is given annually, was given to Eli because he started at tight end and defensive tackle this past season and is currently ranked fourth in his class.

Larry Sellick won the defensive excellence plaque, given to the most talented senior on defense. Larry received the award, as voted by his teammates, because of his

play as defensive captain and starting as middle linebacker.

Jason Bohinsky won the offensive excellence plaque, given to the best senior running back. This season Jason started all ten games at fullback and was one of two players that did not miss a practice this season.

All of Ambridge's seniors received a plaque commemorating their season, a football jacket a forty dollar gift certificate for Dick's Sporting Goods and luggage.

The Keynote speaker at the banquet was former National Football League head coach and Steeler Offensive Coordinator, Joe Walton. The banquet was a rousing success and a large debt of gratitude is owed all of the football parents.



Honored Football players (from L to R): Larry Sellick, Eli Holsinger, and Jason Bohinsky

Players shine as all-stars

by Jenni Richards

Seniors Josh Miller and Petri Wiklund, both forwards, and goaltender Scott Kokoski were chosen to represent Ambridge Area High School on the Western team in this year's WPIHL All-star game, which took place January 19 in Indiana County.

Being named an all-star is quite an honor. Each coach must submit a list of his best players, listed in order of their ranking. A representative is picked from each

team, and the rest are chosen according to their position in the ranking.

Although the Western team was defeated 3-2 by the Eastern team, only one goal was let in by Kokoski, who played half of the game. "Scott made a lot of good saves," Ambridge coach Tony Miller said. Wiklund and Miller each recorded an assist.

Another All-star game will be played between the WPIHL and the SHIHL. Ambridge will be represented by Petri Wiklund.

continued from page 7

Big Brothers/Big Sisters

Helping her Little is important to Cheryl. She stated, "Two days a week...it's not a lot of time but we [the mentors] can make a difference."

When asked if he thought mentors like Mike and Cheryl could make a difference, Mr. McGee, principal of Anthony Wayne School, stated, "Definitely! Little ones look up to big one to emulate them."

Mr. McGee said of the future of mentoring, "I'm hoping it continues and grows, [however], that will depend on the big ones." There will always be children in need of

positive role models but there will not always be volunteers willing to help them.

The BB/BS mentoring program is a wonderful way for teenagers to reach out to little children.. It only takes a little time to make a big difference. If you have any questions about the program of would like more information, contact Mrs. Milo in room 324A. Volunteering can have a lasting impact on a child. As one of BB/Bs's slogans says, "Who's he going to grow up to be like if he can't be like you?" Think about it.



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